

I am retired and find my telephone bills rising each month. I urge you to help stop phone companies from imposing misleading charges on my monthly phone bill and reveal the true prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations, including CU. This petition, CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue. Many of my friends have mentioned how annoyed they are with a long list of new charges, and ever-escalating charges and how frustrated they are. In addition I think this practice is deceitful. Phone bills should be truthful, easy to read and easy to understand. Instead, the long distance and wireless bills are filled with surcharges with misleading names that imply the line items are mandated by law, when I believe they are not. Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These additions make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. It also impedes competition if consumers cannot accurately compare prices. The FCC should fulfill its role as an advocate of the consumers and immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate carrier practices related to line item charges on bills for wireline and wireless phone service. Practices in violation of the Commission's "Truth in Billing" Order should be declared illegal and carriers should be prohibited from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.